

# the ASSEMBLAGER

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## ON CLARK FORK:



*Allar to the Delicacy and Strength of Nature IV.* 7 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 6". Stacked, string-bound torn papers with bones-to-dust mouse resting in stone "bowl." The stack is made from pages of an old scrapbook (c. 1960) that someone was throwing out but then thought to ask if I wanted. This is the fourth piece, in what seems like a years-apart "series." The insect hole is simply what I consider part of an ongoing process with this piece. Steve Gibbs photo.

How many artists do you know who live where an osprey drops a fish on their deck at dinner? Evelyn Sooter dwells among such circumstances along a cedered curve in the Clark Fork River, where Idaho elbows Montana and where manna for her artistic assemblages keeps coming out of heaven and earth like the cycle of rain into rivers and rivers into rain.

Born in St. Louis—daughter of a father who was a marine, farmer, shorebird carver, and one-room-school teacher, and a mother who was a tailor and meticulous quilter—Sooter bought her 16 acres of Idaho and independence in fall 1978. But she came to it with more turns than a prayer wheel.

One of three children, Evelyn and her family moved from their farm in Missouri to Tustin, California, near Santa Ana, while she was still a girl. The village, as she remembers it, little more than a dusty crossroads among orange trees and eucalyptus

*I Stop When I Like What I See.*

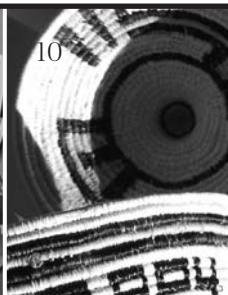
groves, had paths to its intersection. She left the day she graduated from high school.

Sooter had begun working at age 15, cleaning hotel rooms, waitressing. Long in thrall to horses (she had a pony as a child), she was soon employed on a thoroughbred breeding farm northwest of Santa Barbara, gentling the weanlings, teaching them to lead. Later, she took them to yearling sales, met racetrack people, and accepted a grooming job for racehorses. She worked the stables at Santa Anita, Del Mar, and Hollywood Park; always, however, too busy to watch the races.

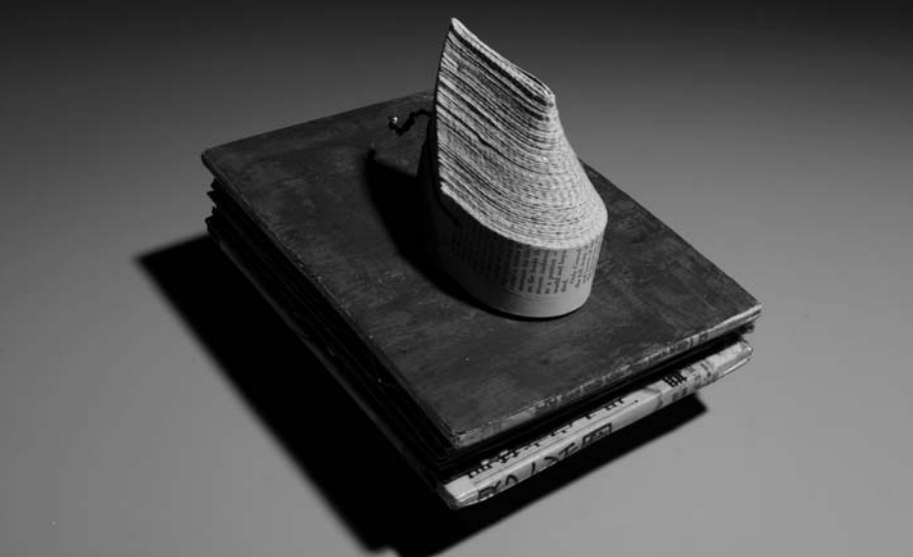
*A poem for leaving, a reason to go....*

There is no road without a turning. In 1970, she hooked a job with a travel agency and before long was writing tickets and letters in English in Stockholm. From there, she took off hitchhiking, finally thumbing a ride in a Mercedes minivan from Istanbul to Kathmandu, camping, en route, alongside the road. After two years, much of it in Nepal, she was back in California, working two shifts as a waitress and saving her money. "I was always a saver." She met a musician who had 80 acres in northern Idaho and needed money. She bought in. Worked some more, then slipped her moorings yet again. Her VW Bug accommodated all of her belongings.

Although the events and circumstances are too knotty to recount in such a short space, in 1978 Sooter anchored on her present Idaho acreage within earshot of the Clark Fork. She lived in a house five miles distant and began to build a one-room cabin (12 x 16') from salvaged materials: mill-ends, second-hand lumber, dollar windows, galvanized tin. She used logs up to six inches in diameter. Recalls neighbor artist and friend Nancy Kienholz, "Her cabin had one-person dimensions, for one-woman strength, to be able to carry it and put it together."



# THE ASSEMBLAGER ON CLARK FORK continued



*Untitled. 5 7/8 x 7 1/8 x 9 1/2".* The “spiral” is paper hand-torn from a book (folded and torn, page by page) and wired into shape. The spiral is resting on a book I made in 1995. I borrowed it from the J. Hutchins’ collection. I used it in the photographs as a substitute, since I’ve been working on something that will look very close, texturally and materially, to the image in the photograph. The 1995 book is autobiographical: the in-progress book has similar multi-textured pages without additional content. The pages are made from various papers, such as Chinese newspaper, slick magazine pages covered in thin, yellowed tracing



paper; cheesecloth binding. I made the cover a year before making the rest of the book—simply experimenting. It is a scrap of Foamcore, oil painted and then covered with yellowed paper (salvaged from a dumpster) while the oil was still wet. The wired pages (spiral) come from a book that had some dumpster history, too. God bless dumpsters.

**Above:** Torn book, ribs, and shell casings. All books were discards from a military library and salvaged from a dumpster. Steve Gibbs photos.

In the fall of that year, she went back to California and waiting tables. The following spring, Sooter returned with money to add another room, electricity, and a well. With the first warning of winter, California-or-Bust again; then as soon as winter thinned away, back for plumbing and bathroom and kitchen. Sometimes serendipitous help dropped by; neighbors lent their seasoned hands. Her father visited and peeled logs.

Sooter’s life assumed a tidal cadence, but after three summers the cabin was 800 square feet. A woodstove chimney feathered smoke above the trees. Finished. And you would not see another house like it, inside or out, in a long day’s ride.

Over the next ten years, Sooter transformed her surroundings with considered arrangements of found and salvaged objects. Inside, every level surface from kitchen to loft was gradually covered with articles—feathers and bones, paper and photographs—and every wall eventually reflected exchanged artwork from other artists. Outside, Sooter’s efforts fended off a forest bent on subsuming the house; a garden spattered with a profusion of perennials contains constellations of antlers and elkhorns, mammal skulls, ribs, femurs, pelvic girdles—an impromptu ossuary that grew by an order of magnitude when she stumbled upon the rockslide where highway workers heave local roadkills. Birdhouses and bird feeders cater to jays, grosbeaks, pine siskins, chickadees and nuthatches and hummingbirds,

all flitting to and from the firs, larch, and hemlock. Deer, elk, moose, and an occasional bear leave their pugmarks passing through the woods between highway and hilltop.

At age forty, Sooter decided to go back to college at the University of Montana. “I didn’t want to be waitressing at fifty. I chose Missoula because it felt like home. I lived in a dorm, loved it; I got scholarships all the way through.” For academic relief, she took a photography course, but before long began turning in photographic collages and alterations. “I made tons of stuff in my dorm room. I dumpster-dived big time in Missoula—it’s where I got a lot of my best stuff. Collecting is...in part, everything to do with envisioning [uses].” In 1994, she graduated with high honors in anthropology, then she retreated once again to her familiar riparian acreage.

## ...and I’m sick of opinions

She faced a new quandary. A stream of visitors drawn to her place because of the “intense social espionage” of a small community—artists, curators, collectors—referred to her constructions, indeed, her house itself, as “art” and to her as an “artist.” In retrospect, she says, “When I was a student, that was my identity. Suddenly I snatched up the new title because it gave me a new identity. I know I’m an artist, yet why would a title matter? It’s what people call me, but it’s not who I am.”

Success and recognition arrived headlong. Collectors and art dealers welcomed her mixed-media assemblages; Denis Ochi found enthusiastic buyers for her work at his gallery in Ketchum and at out-of-state exhibitions. Wilfred Davis Fletcher purchased three of her pieces (eventually added to the permanent collection of the Boise Art Museum and featured in a catalogue alongside artists such as Ruscha, Motherwell, Nauman, Serra, and Rauschenberg). Her work was exhibited in Illinois, Montana, Washington, Texas, California, and Idaho. She says, “An artist never knows where her work goes, but sometimes you learn second-hand.” She does know, for example, that two movie stars in Sun Valley own pieces of her art.

Yet all of Sooter’s accomplishments did not necessarily add up to fulfillment. She says, reflectively, “I am grateful for and appreciative of all the people who believed in me. But somehow it turned in on itself. Making things had once been a refuge; now it wasn’t fun anymore. What certain people might think of me if I wasn’t making art became an overwhelming concern.” Her work gradually ground to a halt.

Three years ago, however, after several years of self-reflection, she resumed her artistry. Not one to saw sawdust, she says, “I know who I am, that I’m legitimate, that ultimately it doesn’t matter whether someone responds to my work, whether it’s seen, or someone wants to buy it.”



Like skins awaiting permission to land at her feeder, within her present work space Sooter has a bewildering number of projects going on at the same time. She says, “I work on several things at once—everything inside and outside my house is fair game. I need to have materials out. I begin with only a vague idea,” she expands, “I don’t make sketches; I make notes about what I’m going to do with things. For me, the materials compel the work. I pick an assortment of items that work together, and then I lose myself...I stop when I like what I see.” In a wry aside, she adds, “I wish I was a *painter*, and all I had to do was paint.”

### Tell me, Phaedrus, what’s good...?

A fair number of other artists like what they see in her finished pieces. Jim Edwards, curator for a recent exhibition in Houston with Sooter’s work in it, says, “[her] assemblages and collages exhibit a tactile beauty which amounts to a kind of threadbare elegance. Her chosen materials are fragile, and even

at times fugitive, fashioned from aged and stained papers, bone, glue, string, wire, wood, etcetera. The aesthetic appeal... is supplied by the manner in which these organic materials are arranged compositionally, and how they allude to the sensuous world of human feelings rather than the factual world of specific subject matter.”

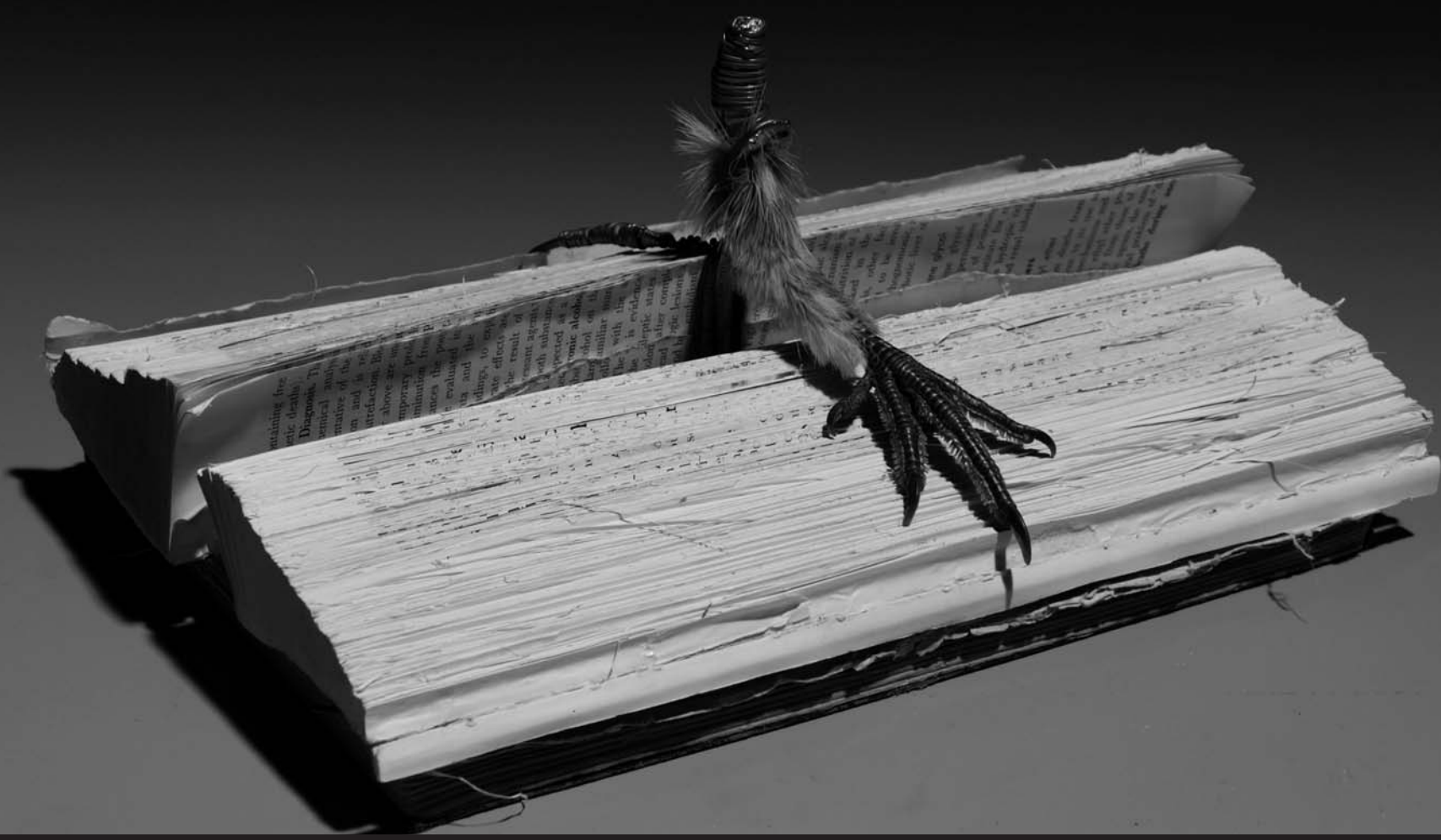
As for her more recent work, Sooter says, “I’m really pleased with what’s unfolding with these altered books that have been waiting around for a few years. Something is opening that feels honest—the way it did before galleries and sales had such an influence. I’m seeing a pattern to what I’ve long been drawn to but hadn’t fully grasped.” She smiles. “This could mean I’ll be able to get rid of a lot of junk!”

— CC

For a virtual tour, see *Evelyn Sooter: Finding Art Everywhere* [www.lili.org/icb/sooter/index.html](http://www.lili.org/icb/sooter/index.html)

- Call out lines from Nerina Pallot’s song, *Idaho*.

Untitled. 4 5/8 x 10 1/2 x 6 3/4". Wire-bound blue grouse foot mounted on a razor-cut "book" (from altered to altar): the foot is positioned above another, smaller, razor-cut "book" (as in taking a step, the stepless step). Steve Gibbs photo.



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# THEY SAY



## TIME CHANGES THINGS;

*but you actually have to change them yourself.*

– Pennsylvania proverb

In my report, I would like to highlight how the Commission is addressing the shrinking economy of 2009-2010. These observations, incidentally, are a condensation of my report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee earlier this year.

When, daily, our legislators go to work in the former Ada County courthouse in Boise, the brightest aspect of that building, other than its people, of course, are its murals illuminating the walls. They are part of an incomparable legacy, from the first comprehensive federal arts program in response to the Great Depression.

Supervised by the WPA, at its peak the program engaged more than 40,000 artists, writers, musicians, and performers. Substantial investment in artists and arts organizations, under enlightened leadership, still yields large and lasting benefits.

### waste not...

It's been said that "a crisis is a terrible thing to waste," a remark as apt today as then. The outcome realized by the federal art, theater, music, and writers' projects blazed a trail, 30 years later, for the National Foundation for the Arts & Humanities Act that created the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. That Act, in turn, led in 1966 to the establishment of the Idaho Commission on the Arts "to stimulate the study and presentation of the arts... and to support public participation and expression in the arts."

Every state in the union now has such an agency, and state funding for their own arts councils far exceeds the budget for the NEA.

As we absorb the current recession, I recall the quip by the poet Robert Frost. He said, "If you are looking for something to be brave about, consider the fine arts." Together, we face a brave new economic world, yet we face it with ingrained optimism regarding the role of the arts. Like those elected officials in the 1930s, we understand that we need the arts now more than ever. Culture cannot compete with national security or health-care reform, of course. But we do need, above all, to sustain our cultural traditions. We do need to foster a climate of creativity. In times such as these, we do need breathing room for the spirit. And we do need the exuberant uplift provided by the arts—even if simply because, as a famous dancer put it, "Art is the only way to run away without leaving home."

Despite a decline in customary sources of arts revenue—individual, corporate, and foundation support—the Commission's professional staff will continue to provide services, assistance, and expertise to artists, communities, and arts' businesses. Allow me to give you three examples of how we still assist and buoy our arts and artists:

- In an effort to familiarize Idahoans with some of their more remarkable resident artists, the Commission used funding from the "American Masterpieces" program of the NEA to originate a public radio series, "Art & Soul." By forming a partnership with KBSU-FM Boise, and

combining with KPBX Spokane and KBYI Rexburg, the Commission was able to cover the state, using first-rate programming assistance.

Two experienced reporters did profile interviews with 20 visual or performing artists and writers around the state, all of whom have earned state or national recognition.

The segments were broadcast weekly from early-September until early-January. Then the interviews were transferred to a CD available to Idaho schools and libraries.

- Because Idaho does not have a percent-for-art program, although six of its cities do, the Commission trained seven regional public art advisers who now serve as local resources for their areas. We developed an informational toolkit, DVD, and PowerPoint presentation for them to use with artists, arts organizations, city employees, and anyone else interested in initiating a public art project. Artists, furthermore, are being taught how to work competitively within the public art marketplace.
- Entering its fourth year, Poetry Out Loud, a statewide poetry recitation competition, has grown to include 23 high schools and 600-some students. The winner receives a paid trip for two to the National Finals in Washington, D. C., with a chance at substantial college scholarship money.

## arts education...

The Commission endeavors, additionally, to make the arts part of our children's formal and even informal education—engendering creative, literate, productive citizens. As one writer put it, “Our children need training and encouragement and support—they need rehearsal space and tempera paint and bass violins, teachers and tap-shoes; they need constant, passionate exposure to the great artistic heritage of their people, so that even if they don't grow up to be artists themselves, they will still have been blessed, as Americans, as Idahoans, have always been blessed, with the artist's gift for seeing the possible in the impossible, the fellow soul on the other side of the fence.”

## artistic presence...

As a community partner—a facilitator, advocate, and service provider—it is our job to listen to people's needs, to respond to those needs with professional services, and, frankly, to be an artistic presence—more than just a logo—in your towns. Altogether, over the past ten years, the Commission has provided more than 2,100 grants and awards totaling \$7.1 million.

Although the Commission is the heart, so to speak, the bone and muscle are 90-some local organizations around the state, providing cultural services for Idahoans. Our professional staff, together with the consultants they recommend or provide, bring technical assistance for practical issues—issues such as board development, strategic planning, publicity, marketing, increased contributions, and now cash-flow budgetary services, in order to build the self-sufficiency of Idaho arts organizations.

In listening and responding to the artistic needs of Idaho artists and communities, the Commission recently engaged in a renewal of its Long-Range Plan. We traveled across the state, facilitating 12 public planning meetings. We asked residents questions—the last being how we might assist them to achieve their artistic vision for their community. We listened. By and large, they expressed optimism about their future and were clear about their needs and priorities. We reviewed their responses and identified their four key issues that became the four goals our agency will address over the next five years.

And I must say that this was an invigorating process—because through it all, we take our direction from Idahoans—where they live and according to their expressed needs. That is why we simplified our grant-making, merging multiple programs into one with our new Public Programs in the Arts. We have substantially reduced the paperwork required by grant applicants and provided greater stability in our funding structure. Thus, we are doing more with less—since we can't provide more, we are making what we can provide more valuable—and counter-intuitively, we are also increasing accountability by basing grant review on past performance rather than on an uncertain future.

## a few words about our finances...

At present, 45 percent of our funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts; the balance is derived from our state legislative appropriation.

Last year, we were selected as one of the first agencies to develop a zero-based budget, aligning our agency resources consistent with our mission and our statutes. Although demanding, the process served as a helpful review of the allocation of our resources in support of our identified priorities. In fact, because of the zero-based budgeting process, our agency is now better prepared for the stresses we face. The FY 2009 holdbacks and our preparations for expected FY 2010 reductions were far more straight-forward because we had already run the budget alternatives. Neither the holdbacks to-date nor the FY 2010 prospect of a 6% permanent reduction in the agency appropriation will substantially impact our ability to provide the highest-priority services of the long range plan. We may not be able to do everything we would like to do; but we will be able to accomplish all of our key objectives. We based our planning on what we have—not on what we wished we had.

In tough times we will redouble our efforts, making what we do more valuable with more reliability and fewer administrative hurdles. If, as Dr. Susan Jeffers says, “We have been taught to believe that negative equals realistic and positive equals unrealistic,” then some will regard our advocacy in the years ahead as unrealistic. But we will soldier on—encouraging wonder, applauding excellence. As author Michael Chabon says, “Every grand American accomplishment, every innovation that has benefitted and enriched our lives, every lasting social transformation, everything that has from the start made America the world capital of hope, has been the fruit of the creative imagination, of the ability to reach beyond received ideas and ready-made answers to some new place, some new way of moving through the world.” That is what our Idaho arts and artists are about.

— Michael Faison, Executive Director



Mr. Faison contemplates the ebbing tide that strands all boats.



# SIMPLIFY,

## SIMPLIFY, SIMPLIFY

– Henry David Thoreau

Representatives from Sandpoint arts community meeting for new guidelines discussion.



### *You Asked for It, You Have It.*

I want to discuss briefly the changes we are making to the Commission grant process and how this simpler funding process will work for you.

Below, I have listed the current categories for grants to organizations. There are some that have remained the same, some that have been amended, and a few that have been reinvented. I'll discuss each one; however, Public Programs in the Arts (PPA) and Entry Track are the new categories, replacing General Operating Support, as well as Project Support.

#### **Unchanged:**

- TumbleWords and Public Art & Cultural Facilities are unaltered and application details are in the guideline booklet.

#### **Amended:**

- Arts Education Project Grants consisted of two funding categories. They now are combined into one. Requests can range from \$1,500-\$15,000.
- QuickFund\$, Quick Projects, and QuickFund\$ Technical Assistance (QFTA) remain quarterly opportunities. The maximum Quick Projects request has been raised to \$1,500. The maximum QFTA request has been raised to \$750.

The new QuickFund\$ restriction states that Quick Project grants now are intended for community-based arts projects that are ineligible for Entry Track or PPA. Therefore, organizations that receive Entry Track or PPA grants cannot apply for Quick Projects.

#### **Reinvented:**

- Public Programs in the Arts provides ongoing support for program planning and business stabilization to established arts organizations with a history of funding from the Commission. In FY 2010 every applicant accepted into PPA is considered *interim* and will not be reviewed by a panel in 2009. In subsequent years, the applicant's final reports will be used as the basis for panel review every three years.

#### ***Public Programs in the Arts Eligibility***

Organizations with paid staff and a minimum of a three-year established, public-funding history with the Commission, while operating as a public, nonprofit employer of professional artists compensated at prevailing standards.

Grant amounts need not be specified because they are based on a funding formula that includes panel review assessment, fiscal size, and prior Commission funding.

After the May 2009 Commission meeting, PPA recipients will be notified of their pending grants.

You will sign and return the certification page, the completed budget form 5-B, and a one-page narrative description on how these funds and their match will be used.

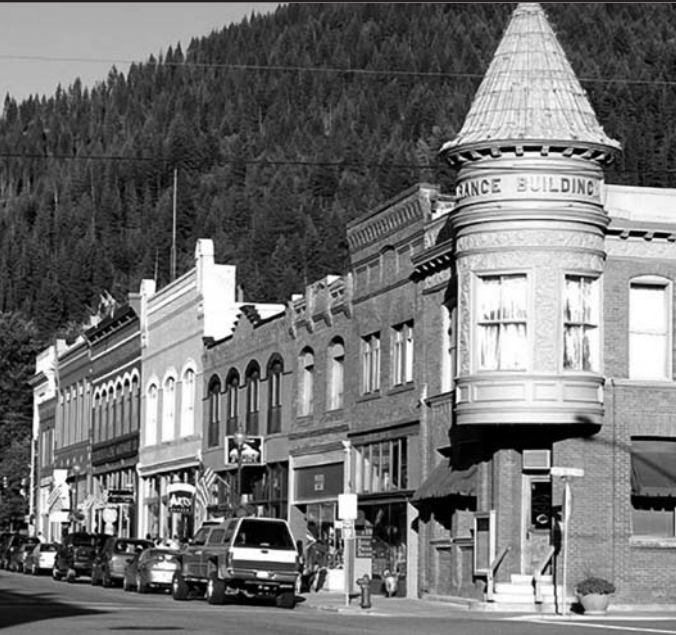
Entry Track is designed as a doorway for organizations new to the Commission that present ongoing public programs in the arts. As you might expect, more information is requested from Entry Track applicants than of PPA applicants. That is because organizations in Entry Track are for the most part newer to the Commission. In this program, there is an application form, narrative questions, and a budget form.

#### ***Entry Track Eligibility***

The only difference between PPA and Entry Track is that an Entry Track organization has been operating only one complete fiscal year. Entry Track is the way the Commission provides ongoing support for university-associated arts organizations. As in PPA, no requested amount need be specified in Entry Track because grant amounts are formula-based, just as for PPA.

– Michelle Coleman,  
Community Development Director

# the GREATNESS



## Wallace, Idaho

Miles die at just over one per minute  
where the terraces rise above Smelterville.

A slag heap five stories high runs all the way  
to Kellogg. Deranged mammals sift through the metal

scarps, and the river drinks from the screes,  
which explains why it seems to flow

uphill, the way we're driving. Osprey  
stitch thermals above the ridge

and skulls of coyotes grin at other scavengers still  
nosing around that eternal hunger.

Clouds prowl the mountains,  
and houses lean into the same wind

drifted acid from the smelter over these firs.  
Mountains die too, one billion ounces

of one per hundred years. In Africa  
mines drop 15,000 feet, and it is 140

degrees in the air irrigating shafts  
through rock too hot to touch.

Here they built the train depot  
with ballast from ships that docked

at the edge of the continent.  
On the road to Thompson Pass, just before

the tour mine through a quartzite they call  
granite number twenty-five, is a house

where someone repairs clocks. In the museum  
a scale model of Galena has each level

painted on a sheet of glass, and resembles an ant farm.  
Though glass is made of sand, at Galena they mine silver.

There are lots of other reasons, too, not to believe them  
when they say most of the stuff we have, we don't care

about wanting, at the rate of 140 pounds per ounce.

*D. S. Butterworth grew up in Seattle and earned his Ph.D. in English literature at the University of North Carolina. He currently teaches creative writing and English at Gonzaga University. The poems are drawn from his collection, The Radium Watch Dial Painters, available from and reprinted with the kind permission of Lost Horse Press, 110 Lost Horse Lane, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864; [www.losthorsepress.org](http://www.losthorsepress.org).*

## OF POETS

*is that they gasp with their  
words what they only glimpse  
with their minds.*

– Paul Valéry

### Ore

Clouds are heavy with ore where  
the Spokane Valley opens up east

towards the mountain, beyond the state  
line where lonely men go to see

the flesh of girls. You can't tell  
if the RVs lined up are for sale,

or shedding vacationers  
along the river's ceramic campfires

flaming under a tin sky. Cross  
Highway 95, the one where

all the people die, and burn your miles,  
over one per minute, to learn

the economics of extraction, of life  
lived where the invisible metals

of the Coeur d'Alene wink out  
like all those pans, with all those flashes.

What's a gun for, if not to protect the flag,  
they say on the news. Or like they say in church,

certain valleys and certain darknesses  
lie between us and the mountain:

there are a whole lot of places you don't want to be  
but pass through anyway, to get to where you do—

in town they're solving the mysteries of shirt buttons,  
One at a time, amazed to find one another inside.





# THE JOB

## OF THE ARTIST

*is always to deepen the mystery.*

– Sir Frances Bacon

Lawrence Smart, The Valhalla Quartet. Matched Florentine mandolin, A-style mandolin, Florentine mandola, and Florentine mandocello. Wood, metal, and shell.



Fellowships are awarded to individual artists of exceptional talent in recognition of outstanding work and commitment to their artistic development. Panelists—Harriett Green, South Carolina; Ben Mitchell, Washington; Gail Siegel, Washington—used evaluation criteria of 85% for artistic excellence (work shows originality, distinguished consistency, and preeminent quality); and 15% for professional history and community involvement. The Commission received 53 applications for this fellowship round. Steve Gibbs, commissioner from Coeur d’Alene, served as panel chair.



The identity and residence of each applicant remained anonymous throughout the review and approval process. Panelists recommended the top ten applications for recognition. Seven full fellowship recipients received an award of \$3,500 each; three additional artists received honorable mentions.

The panelists selected a diverse group of artists living in towns as disparate as Boise, Hope, Ketchum, McCall, and Moscow. Craft, design, and visual arts are represented, characterized by media such as paint, film, wood, film, ceramics, and stainless steel.

### Fellowship Recipients:

#### Julie Singer, Ketchum - Ceramics

Focusing on elements that leave evidence of time’s passage, Singer is interested in fragments, weathered surfaces—ephemeral details revealing the tracks of time’s little wheels. “It is with the subtle details that the story of the work is revealed.” The panelists were persuaded her work is delightful, accomplished, and in subtle ways contradicts its medium. One described her work as “smart.”

#### Stephanie Wilde, Boise - Mixed Media

The artist’s work is a commentary on social, philosophical, and spiritual aspects of human nature. Wilde is inspired by the pleasure and meditation of repeating complex patterns referring to historical and symbolic motifs. In her artist statement she says, “Narrative is the moving force of my visual language with history at the core...my symbolic figures navigate uncertain territories responding to the complexities of contemporary life.” The panelist described her work as “exquisite” with detail that “wows you.” Noting the presence of her hand, they added that the work resembled a contemporary manuscript.

#### Lawrence Smart, McCall - Instrument Making

Remarking that he became intrigued with stringed musical instruments as a teenager, Smart has spent the last 33 years “captivated by the look, feel, sound, and even the smell of these simple

artifacts.” His goal is to create a tool that is both beautiful and functional, and since 1986 he has built over 200 guitars and mandolin-family instruments. The panelists admired the high mastery of technique in his work, saying it is sculptural, yet reminiscent of a fine painting.

#### Garth Claassen, Caldwell - Drawing

While one panelist said that Claassen’s work was “intriguing,” they all agreed that the large drawings in his series, *The Heavy Dancers*, were uninhibited, repugnant figures dominating their environment. His draftsmanship, pronounced “high craft,” was uniformly admired by the panelists, as was his making art out of subject matter from “his own time” —an accomplishment that has become increasingly rare. This series, begun during the invasion of Iraq, hatched from drawings and paintings depicting “chunky, blundering titans bent on confronting some as yet invisible enemy.” They convey, nevertheless, a tumid vitality. Claassen sees them as “every-man- figures that exemplify a recurrent and universal form of imperialistic folly.”

#### Glenn Grishkoff, Hope - Mixed Media

Panelists commented on Grishkoff’s technical prowess, the diversity of styles, and the unique nature of his art form. His work is distinctive because it combines ceramics, sculpture, and brushes. Over more than a decade, his reputation has grown: from national to international accomplished sculptor and brush-maker. In his artist statement, he says, “Painting with a brush



Julie Singer, *Global Tea Party*, porcelain and stoneware, 11 x 13 x 9". Andrew Kent photo.



Stephanie Wilde, *Harmed*, central panel, detail, ink and acrylic with gold leaf on museum board, 12 x 12".



Glenn Grishkoff, *Ink Well*, clay, sand, horsetail hair, glass, ink well 5 x 16 x 5", brush 25 x 4 x 4".

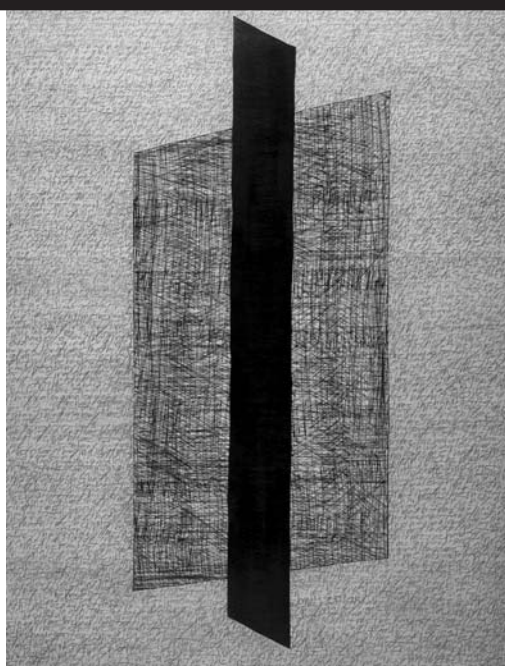




Garth Claassen, *Wall*, 2007, conte and charcoal on paper, 57 x 42". Steve Grant photo.



Geoff Krueger, *The Living Room*, oil on canvas, 54 x 72".



Troy Passey, *That Hit Me the Hardest of Anything in a long time*, ink, graphite, acrylic on paper, 24 x 19". Timeless Photography photo.

you’ve hand-crafted is primal, magical.” Raised by a Russian father (who in turn was born and raised in China), Grishkoff later lived in Japan and assimilated the “essence of stroke and the power of natural materials” from both cultures.

#### Troy Passey, Boise - Drawing, Painting, Conceptual Art

“Words as ‘found objects’ are the basis for my artwork,” the artist explains. “I often make a note of...scraps of conversations I have overheard. I love the poetry of plainspoken speech.” Passey translates those verbal sherds into a repetitive text that forms large, striking, minimalist shapes. He finds the repetition of a particular phrase meditative and soothing. The words or phrases range from capricious to profound: “phooey on everything,” for example. The panelists were drawn to his “elegant, subtle text, and mark-making.” They were equally impressed by the work’s monochromatic nature.

#### Geoffrey Krueger, Boise - Oil Painting, Mixed Media

Professing a strong interest in landscape, Kruger also is concerned with three major elements: the depiction of space, light, and strong sculptural shape. These elements are evident in his recent “half-house” paintings, where the “extra dimension of a subtle narrative works on several levels.” A house halved with all the contents exposed says “This is how and where we live, and by making this association, these paintings actually become a touchstone for looking at oneself.” Kruger has had work accepted for two Boise Art Museum Triennial exhibitions, and he created a large public art mural for the Boise airport.

#### Honorable Mentions:

##### John Snyder, Moscow - Photography

The panelists called Snyder’s photographs “exquisite... landscapes that are fresh rather than idealized.” They also were impressed by his use of the platinum-palladium printing process. Snyder writes, “Photographing and writing about the Palouse landscape allows me to combine a strong personal interest in agriculture with re-exploration of a formative influence in my life. I was born and raised on the eastern edge of the Palouse, in all of its dusty grandeur, and that vantage provides my earliest visual impressions of the world.” After a 25-year absence, he has returned to the place where he was raised, limning its essence with a photographic format that uses “long tonal scale and softer feel—harmonious with the subtle and sinuous contours of the Palouse....”

##### Michael Cordell, Boise - Sculpture

Although he has a long history with photography, Cordell more recently has explored the “plastic properties of stainless steel and copper.” For the past eight years, he has been sculpting

metal, and he, too, has had works accepted into the Boise Art Museum Triennial. Another vertical sculpture adds distinction to the corner location of the *Boise Weekly* office; yet another piece resides at the St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center. Cordell asserts “ [the]...artistic issues and expressive concerns seem to remain much like those I encountered in photography. These similarities and the new insights [they provide] are exciting to reveal.” The panelists agreed the connection between his small “vessels” and the large monumental pieces is “compelling.”

##### William Lewis, Boise - Painting

In his artist statement, which the panel regarded as “poetic,” Lewis says, “Perhaps we have all, at one time or another, encountered an array of neglected objects, or witnessed a seemingly mundane occurrence in some unremarkable place, and these objects or events have been imbued with a special quality.” Painting everyday experiences that allow for all the “permutations” inflicted by memory is the manner in which he communicates. Lewis has shown work at a national level. One panelist described his paintings as “damn interesting,” and all of them appreciated the monumentality of his work and its mysterious narrative.

– Barbara Robison, Director, Artist Services



Top: John Snyder, *Truncated Barn and Hills*, platinum/palladium print, 8 x 10".  
Left: Michael Cordell, *Vessel*, stainless steel, 8 x 3 1/2 x 4".  
Right: William Lewis, *Chopping Block*, oil on canvas, 72 x 72".



Venantia Mukangeruka's basket.



# A MASTER

## CAN TELL YOU

*what he expects of you. A master who is also a teacher, however, awakens your own expectations.*

– Jack Teegarden, carver

### Learning the Customary

Learned so seamlessly from kin and friend, the folk arts become part of our collective identity. They are thriving in Idaho. For the past couple of decades, people from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas have made a home here. The Traditional Arts Apprenticeships of the Idaho Commission on the Arts reflects this new Idaho and supports the traditional ways by which artists in old and newcomer communities teach the crafts, dances, songs, work practices, and celebrations to their young.

### Bosnian Folk Dance and Songs from Glamoc

Igor Bjekic, the dance director for Mladi Behar, will teach Arijana Kajdic folk dances from the Glamoc region in Bosnia Herzegovina, where they have their roots. As Igor passes on his repertoire to Arijana, she will be able to assist him in teaching other dancers in the group. Arijana is already an experienced dancer and this new repertoire will enhance her performance and teaching ability. In addition, Igor will teach her the songs that traditionally accompany the Glamoc dances.

### Nez Perce Cornhusk Weaving

Since the contact with Europeans and the acquisition of the horse, cornhusk bags have been one of the Nez Perce most traditional crafts. Flat and decorated with different designs on both sides, these bags became part of the Nez Perce horse rider's gear. Several masters, most of them now deceased, have passed on their skills to others. Jenny Williams learned from her grandmothers and will now teach her daughter Lydia Skahan.

**Charya Nritya, a Newar Ritual Dance,** dates back more than 1,000 years. Originating in Nepal, it has been disseminated throughout the Himalayan region and in diaspora communities worldwide. Refugees and immigrants from Himalayan communities–Nepalese, Tibetan, and other minorities–have settled in Idaho for the past 20 years. In the Pacific and Intermountain Northwest region, LiAnne Hunt is one of the few dancers who were given the privilege to teach others. She will teach Rinzing Choden five distinct dances.

### Nez Perce Beaded Horse Trappings

Upon receiving the horse, changes in Nez Perce lifestyle were inevitable. They became more mobile and had to create horse and rider gear and regalia. For decades, tribal artists have used materials found in the plateau, such as horns,

deer hide, and natural fibers, to make saddles and trappings. Elaborate regalia to “dress” horse and riders became a source of pride for many Nez Perce families. Designs and colors of beaded trappings often identify the makers, who pass on patterns and techniques to their young. This apprenticeship is a great example of transmission of culture and skills within the family, as Jena Henry will be teaching their family designs to her daughter Regine Wilson, who has already learned the ways of breaking and training a horse from her father. Mother and daughter will work together to create beaded trappings so Regine and other family members can parade with the Nez Perce Appaloosa Horse Club.

### Indian Classical Dance Bharatha Natyam

is believed to be the oldest form of Indian classical dance. “Devotional in spirit, it is a female solo dance,” says Sudha Vasudevan, who is known as Idaho's Baharatha Natyam dancer and master. From the age of five, Sudha studied under her Guru, Ms. Jayalakshimi in Madras, India. At twelve, she passed her Arangetram and began to give solo presentations and help her Guru teach other students.

For the past three years, Radhika Narsinghani has been learning the fundamentals of Bharatha Natyan. She is now seven years old and ready to learn more complex parts of the dance. Last year,



Arijana Kajdic of Mladi Behar.



Nez Perce cornhusk weaving by Jenny Williams.



LiAnne Hunt with Charya Nritya, dancer.



Burundi weaving by Venantia Mukangeruka.





Frank Werner and Mark Liter, waterfowl decoy makers.



Gun rig and kidney belt by Deana Attebery.



Norma Pintar at *Danza de las Pinas*.

she learned how to synchronize footsteps with music, hand mudras representing birds, animals, and objects, and some Abinayas to express emotions. This year, in an early preparation for the Arangetrum, Radhika will learn dance details of higher complexity, such as Kaythuvan, Pushpanjali, Alaripu, Jatiswaram, and Padam. Quite mature for her age, Radhika wants to follow her master’s example and pass on the dance she loves to other youngsters.

**Burundi Basket Weaving**

Basket weaving provides the support structure to maintain generations-old skills and community aesthetics. At home, materials are easily available for gathering, bartering, or purchasing. Often, refugee traditional artists have difficulty in identifying, gathering, or even purchasing the natural fibers commonly used in their work. Away from home, some adaptation is inevitable. In this apprenticeship, for example, the master is using some recycled materials, such as grocery bags, to wrap the coil of sisal, and materials unraveled from rice bags and tarps to create the patterns.

Weaving is one of the more productive ways refugees have to increasingly take part together in the life of their new communities, share personal experiences, and practice speaking a new language.

Venantia Mukangeruka, a weaver since childhood, will teach another Burundi refugee, Beatrice Singirankabo, how to develop patterns and use sisal and other recyclable materials to enhance the traditional coiling techniques she learned from other women in Africa. A refugee in four different countries since 1972, Venantia finds that weaving provides a social network for her community. Weaving with other Burundi women will allow her to continue their homeland tradition in Boise.

**Carnatic Music**

Born and raised in southern India, Sharmila Velamur was trained as a Carnatic classical singer. She is now accepting Sahana and Sanjana Vasudevan as her apprentices. The grandchildren of master Carnatic singers, they will learn classical music and songs critical to the accompaniment of dance, social, and sacred celebrations in Indian communities. Learning this tradition takes time and dedication, and needs to begin early in childhood. Sharmila will be teaching beginner techniques of rhythm-keeping and voice-delivery applied to a basic repertoire of sacred songs. Over the years, the apprentices will gain a more elaborate repertory and will be able to accompany dances.

**Carving Waterfowl Decoys**

A master carver of waterfowl, working decoys, Frank Werner is aware of the need to pass on his skills and knowledge of the practices associated with the use of decoys to hunt. Mark Liter is Frank’s chosen apprentice. He comes from a family of carvers, is a biologist and a dedicated woodworker. Common interests and regard for natural resources brought them together in a learning partnership. Mark has already carved “birds” that he and Frank use to hunt in north Idaho, where they live.

**Rawhide Braiding**

Tack-making and repair are common skills required from working ranchers and cowboys. Deana Attebery grew up in a family of ranchers. As a young girl, she discovered her love for working with leather. In 1994, she received an apprenticeship grant to learn how to make saddles from Don Brown, a famous Idaho saddlemaker. In 2003, she learned how to braid rawhide from master braider Steve Derricott, of Meridian. Over the years, Deana has taught saddlemaking, leather tooling, and braiding. She is well known for the quality of her work and her ability to teach.

Joan Likens admires Deana’s leather and rawhide work and wants to learn from her. Their shared interests and connections with the working cowboy community in southwest Idaho are the base for a good learning opportunity. This apprenticeship will enhance Joan’s leather and rawhide braiding.

**Mexican Folk Dance**

Norma Pintar moved from San Luis Potosi to Boise in the mid-1990s. Shortly thereafter, she created a folk dance group. An integral part of the effort to establish a Hispanic Cultural Center in Nampa, the group has grown over the years and currently is an independent dance group incorporating dancers from the Treasure Valley. Pintar’s role as master dancer in the Treasure Valley is significant, because she has trained multiple apprentices, introduced dances and costumes from the different regions to residents of the valley. For the past twelve years, she has taught apprentices who now have their beginner groups. She is a teaching artist with Commission’s AIE program. Her apprentice, Adriana Arreguín, follows in her mother’s, Yadira Arreguín, footsteps. She is one of the young Mexican dancers who retains a vast repertoire learned from Norma, beginning at age three. This apprenticeship has attachment to the art form, family tradition, and community roots.

— Maria Carmen Gambliel, Director, Folk Arts

# ARTISTS WHO

## ALSO TEACH

*are often unsung heroes, sharing generously of their skills for a minimum of recognition.*

– Karen Wright

### Boise

**Ballet Idaho \$9,300** ArtsPowered Learning grant for *Learning Through Dance*, engaging students in dance and with educators to include kinesthetic methods as teaching tools in the classroom. Professional dancer/educators will work in up to 37 schools in the Treasure Valley, central Idaho, and southeast Idaho for one day a week for ten weeks, serving 2,500 students.

**Boise Art Museum \$9,150** ArtsPowered Learning grant for Free School Tour Program for Idaho students and their teachers. Trained museum docents will lead students through interactive discussions about work on display, followed by a hands-on art activity in the BAM education studios that reinforces concepts discussed in the tour.

**Boise Philharmonic \$8,850** ArtsPowered Learning grant for Ensembles in the Schools, the music outreach program of the Philharmonic, taking its brass, string, and woodwind quintets to 65 elementary, middle, junior, and senior high schools in central, southwest, and southeastern Idaho to perform and provide training for students during the school year. The musical environment created by this program strengthens learning and curricula by addressing the Idaho Humanities Standards in music.

**The Cabin \$9,300** ArtsPowered Learning grant for Idaho Writing Camps, offering students in grades 4-12 week-long instruction from professional writers. Camps are held in seven Idaho communities: Twin Falls, Idaho Falls, Wood River Valley, Caldwell, Teton Valley, Fort Hall Reservation, and Boise. The camp week culminates in a public reading of participant writings and the publication of an anthology of youth writings, *Field Notes*.

**Idaho Dance Theatre \$7,950** ArtsPowered Learning grant for *Leaps and Bounds*, an educational outreach for students grades pre-K-6, providing students with dance experience while educating them about teamwork, physical fitness, creativity, and personal expression. A curriculum guide helps teachers prepare their class for the program in accordance with the Idaho Humanities Standards in dance.

### Idaho Parents Unlimited/VSA Arts of Idaho \$9,150

ArtsPowered Learning grant for Creative Access, providing extended arts experiences for students with disabilities. Wherever possible, instruction is inclusive. The program addresses the needs of these students through outreach, and assistance with project development of high-level artistic experiences.

### Idaho Shakespeare Festival \$8,700

ArtsPowered Learning grant for Idaho Theater for Youth, grades K-6, and *Shakespeareance*, grades 7-12, for in-school, professional theater arts performances together with academic instruction, reaching over 50,000 Idaho students. Each spring, two troupes of actors travel to produce and perform plays adapted for elementary and secondary students, including those in rural, military, and Native American communities.

**Opera Idaho \$7,650** ArtsPowered Learning grant for *Opera in a Box*, an opera excerpt with sets, costumes, singers, and accompanists touring grades to K-12 in Treasure Valley schools. Singers will pull out new props and costumes with each aria, duet, or song.

### Caldwell

**Caldwell Fine Arts \$8,100** ArtsPowered Learning grant for educational outreach, serving Caldwell-area students in grades K-12 with performances and workshops by professional artists performing at their schools or in Jewett Auditorium at The College of Idaho. Presenting school performances for many grades or workshops with smaller groups along with performance information for teachers, adding to the community's cultural experience.

### Cambridge

### Cambridge High School \$2,556

ArtsPowered Learning grant for Writers in the Schools, where writers work bi-weekly with students to improve their skills. By offering opportunities for self expression, modeled on readings of selected literature, students gain an understanding of the art of language and its importance in their lives.

High school students enjoy professional theater through the Idaho Shakespeare Festival's Shakespeareance.

## FY 2009 Arts Education Grants

The Arts Education Program provides support for arts learning that challenges students in their schools and communities. The Commission believes, moreover, that all young people should have curriculum-based arts education linked to state content standards, enriched by opportunities to work with local or Idaho artists and arts resources.

To achieve this goal, the AIE Program encourages teachers, artists, arts organizations, and communities to join as partners in fostering the learning and artistic development of students and their teachers in kindergarten through grade 12. The intent is to refine and improve arts education beyond the standard offerings of public and private schools. Our grants enhance existing programs through the development of innovative curricula and the inclusion of authentic arts resources.

The panel reviewed all of the Arts Education project applications according to criteria that emphasize learning through effectual planning. Successful grant applications represent efficacious leadership, partnership, and outreach. Characterized by decisions based on current, accurate information aligned with a vision of what it means to value the arts, they represent a commitment to measure progress and share the results. To have been successful in such a process is an accomplishment well worthy of congratulations.





The Art Museum of Eastern Idaho engages young people at the museum in activities connected with their exhibits.



Ballet Idaho *Learning Through Dance*.



With local students, Boise Art Museum docent explores the art in the John Taylor exhibition.



In conjunction with the performing arts season, the Pend Orielle Arts Council hosts educational performances at the historic Panida Theater. Area students perform with the Montango dancers.

Idaho Falls

The Art Museum of Eastern Idaho \$9,300 ArtsPowered Learning grant for ARTworks, partnering with newspapers in education at the museum, providing arts-learning for elementary classrooms and bringing students to the museum for tours and lessons based on the museum exhibit.

Idaho Falls Arts Council \$7,950 ArtsPowered Learning grant for professional artists to perform for students in a youth series at the Colonial Theater. The Council works with the artists and local educators to develop education guides to prepare students before attending the performance and demonstrations, as well as for activities after the show extending the experience.

Idaho Falls Youth Arts Center \$2,219 ArtsPowered Learning grant for the Eastern Idaho Children’s Choir, encouraging youngsters through an after-school choral music program. The choir’s mission is to teach youth to value singing excellence through musical activities.

Ketchum

Council Circle Foundation \$1,521 Creative Alternatives for Youth grant for the Youth Circle Art Project, a collaboration with four Blaine County artists and the Youth Circle Program to find innovative ways to reach youth through their artistry.

Wood River Arts Alliance \$6,222 ArtsPowered Learning grant to support the Children’s Arts Festival for the Wood River Valley. This annual one-day event provides an opportunity for young people and their families to celebrate and explore all the arts, allowing them to observe and participate through classes, performances, and demonstrations.

Moscow

Festival Dance & Performing Arts \$8,265 ArtsPowered Learning grant for YouthReach and Discover Dance projects presenting four educational programs by touring professional dance and music companies for about 1,000 students at each venue and 20 Discover Dance classes taught by dance professionals in jazz, African and Irish dance for 10 communities in Latah, Benewah, and Nez Perce counties.

Lionel Hampton International Jazz Festival \$9,300 ArtsPowered Learning grant for Jazz Powered Arts Education, sending national jazz artists into schools to talk about the history and techniques of jazz and to perform. The jazz musicians will conduct workshops and clinics.

McCall

McCall Arts & Humanities Council \$2,856 ArtsPowered Learning grant for ArtSchool, a ten-week residency program pairing local professional artists with fifth-grade classes in McCall, Donnelly, and New Meadows. Professional artists consult with the curriculum specialist to create learning experiences in their disciplines, such as painting, ceramics, drama, and photography.

Nampa

Nampa Civic Center & City of Nampa \$4,650 ArtsPowered Learning grant for Up with Arts, providing 4,000 Nampa students with a professional performances, theater etiquette, cultural experience, and development of artistic talent. The purpose of the program is to provide local students opportunities to develop their artistic talents and discover whether the arts offer them a career.

Idaho Arts Charter School \$9,300 Creative Alternatives for Youth grant to support Folk Arts Rock Out, an after-school program with lectures and demonstrations of community artistic traditions for at-risk students.

Mujeres Unidas de Idaho \$5,300 Creative Alternatives for Youth Stay-in-School Quinceañera Program, inviting eighth graders to attend a series of bi-weekly workshops on arts and culture. The program works to reduce the 40% drop-out rate of Hispanic middle school students by encouraging student’s personal development, understanding of cultural values, appreciation of academic principles, and community involvement.

Pocatello

Idaho State Civic Symphony \$4,037 ArtsPowered Learning grant for Idaho State Youth Orchestra and Summerstrings, supporting the youth symphony and summer camp for grades 4-12. The Symphony program will provide an outlet for young musicians and broaden their skills.

Sandpoint

Pend Oreille Arts Council \$9,000 ArtsPowered Learning grant to support Ovations, which provides performances, workshops, and master classes in music, theater, and dance for 4,000 students at the Panida Theater and at local schools. Workshops and master classes are designed to offer individualized instruction to students studying music, theater, and dance.

Sun Valley

Sun Valley Center for the Arts \$6,318 ArtsPowered Learning grant to coordinate a residency with the New Orleans Hot 8 Brass Band and Wood River High School, Wood River Middle School, Carey High School, and the Community School, including workshops, lectures, performances.

Sun Valley Performing Arts/Next Stage Theatre \$3,180 ArtsPowered Learning grant for the Next Stage Drama Club, giving young people an opportunity to explore the performing arts in an after-school program. These productions are designed to take students through the entire theatrical process, from audition to performance.

Twin Falls

College of Southern Idaho/Arts on Tour \$7,845 ArtsPowered Learning grant to support Arts on Tour, a performing arts series by professional artists for grades 5-6 and 10-12 in the Twin Falls and adjacent rural communities.

# through APPRECIATION,

# WE MAKE

*excellence in others our own.*

– Henry David Thoreau

Governor and First Lady with Horace Axtell.



## Governor's Awards in the Arts

Last October, Idaho celebrated the abundance and diversity of the arts in our state with the Nineteenth Biennial Governor's Awards in the Arts. As a board member of the Idaho Commission on the Arts, I was honored to attend this extraordinary event.

The biennial awards were established in 1970 by the Commission to elevate recognition and awareness of Idaho arts and artists—Idaho was among the first states in the nation to establish such a program.

Held in the historic Colonial Theater in Idaho Falls, the ceremony was a showcase of talent. The dozen award recipients came from all corners of Idaho. They were honored for excellence in six categories and for work ranging from metalwork and saddlemaking to theater and dance, portraiture and landscape painting to tribal heritage and community philanthropy, arts administration to arts education.

After being presented with their awards-etched silver medallions hung on tri-colored ribbons—each recipient offered a short message from the stage. Most attributed their achievements in the arts to someone who inspired them at a young age—a testament to the need to emphasize the arts in our homes, schools, and communities.

Governor C. L. "Butch" Otter and First Lady Lori Otter gave winning performances as hosts. At one point, Governor Otter grabbed a guitar and charmed the audience with professional renditions of some campfire favorites.

The evening climaxed with the premiere of a classical composition by former "Excellence in the Arts" recipient Jim Cockey, whose piece was selected in a recent statewide competition made possible by a collaboration between the Office of the Attorney General and the Idaho State Department of Education. Presented flawlessly by 80 string musicians from Madison High School, Rexburg, the piece was directed by Rick Hansen, this year's award recipient in "Arts Education." The orchestra dedicated its performance to Nez Perce elder Horace Axtell, recipient of this year's "Lifetime Achievement" award and recent honoree of the National Endowment for the Arts, recognized with our nation's highest public honor in the folk and traditional arts.

The recipients deserve our recognition and congratulations; Idaho Falls our gratitude for hosting this fine ceremony; vice chair Laurel Sayer our accolades for chairing the event; and the Governor and First Lady our thanks and appreciation for their enthusiastic and continuous public support of the arts.

– Jeanne Anderson, Commissioner, Driggs

## Excellence in the Arts

**John Collias**, painter, Boise

**Becky Gili**, former dancer, dance instructor, Idaho Falls

**Cynthia Guild Stoetzer**, painter, Driggs  
**Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre**,  
Coeur d'Alene

## Excellence in Folk & Traditional Arts

**Gary Keithley**, silversmith and saddlemaker, Melba

**Nahum Hersom**, blacksmith, Boise

## Support for the Arts

**The Idaho Community Foundation**, Boise  
**Susan Jacklin**, Post Falls

## Excellence in Arts Education

**Rick Hansen**, orchestra director, Madison School District, Rexburg

## Excellence in Arts Administration

**Julie Kilgrow**, former executive director, Opera Idaho, Boise

## Lifetime Achievement Award

**Horace Percy Axtell**, Nez Perce elder, Lewiston



Governor Otter on stage.



Recipients.



Kim David Tweedy and Laitt Potter.



# IF WE CAN

First place, Devin Bean, Sugar Salem High School, alongside Executive Director Michael Falson.



## READ A POEM SILENTLY,

*it is not a valid poem: a poem demands pronunciation. Poetry remembers that it was an oral art before it was a written art. It remembers that it was first song.*

– Jorge Luis Borges, poet

### Poetry Aloud

The Idaho State Final for *Poetry Out Loud*, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Poetry Foundation, and the Idaho Commission on the Arts, was held February 21 at the Boise Contemporary Theater.

*Poetry Out Loud* evolved from a partnership between the 50 state arts agencies, the National Endowment for the Arts, and The Poetry Foundation.

The Foundation, located in Chicago, is the publisher of *Poetry* magazine, a monthly established in 1912 (first publisher, incidentally, of Idaho's Ezra Pound, arguably the most influential poet of the 20th Century). This year, participants were honored by the presence of Stephen Young, the program's director at the Foundation.

The *Poetry Out Loud* program encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. Robert Frost said, "The ear is the only true writer and the only true reader," and the program builds on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form; however, *Poetry Out Loud* dramatization "subtly highlights the meaning of a poem without distracting gestures." The program invites the dynamic aspects of the spoken word into high school English, speech, and drama classes.

Starting in September 2007, schools in all 50 states were invited to participate in the program. Eight Idaho high schools partook in classroom and school-wide contests, advancing to the state final. This year, 23 high schools statewide declared an interest in competing. All 673 contestants selected their recitations from the same anthology of more than 400 classic and contemporary poems assembled by the Poetry Foundation. (One poem has to be pre-20th century and one has to be less than 25 lines.)

Idaho's winner received \$200 and an all-expenses-paid trip for two to Washington, D.C., to compete at the National Finals April 27-28. His school received a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books for the school library. The runner-up received \$100, with \$200 for her school library. *Poetry Out Loud* will award a total of \$50,000 in scholarships and school stipends at the National Finals, with at least a \$20,000 college scholarship for the national champion. Award-winning actress Tyne Daly, *A Prairie Home Companion*'s Garrison Keillor, and poet Luis Rodriguez, among others, will judge the Poetry Out Loud National Finals.

A panel of five distinguished judges agreed to serve for the Finals: Justice Wayne Kidwell, former justice on the Idaho Supreme Court for six years; Nicole LeFavour, state senator for District 19; Mi-Ai Parrish, publisher of *The Idaho Statesman*; Jim Irons, poet and a former Idaho Writer-in-Residence and professor of English at College of Southern Idaho; Diane Raptosh, poet and professor of English at The College of Idaho.

***The judges evaluated the participants on physical presence, voice and articulation, appropriateness of dramatization, level of difficulty, evidence of understanding, and overall performance.***

### The Idaho State Finalists:

Eric Anderson, Borah High School  
Devin Bean, Sugar Salem High School  
Ana Bencomo, Teton High School  
Pamela Craig, Kuna High School  
Maddie Cutts, New Plymouth High School  
Tessa DeWhitt, Capital High School  
Linyi Gao, Moscow High School  
Megan Gregory, Mountain Home High School  
Kaitlin Jensen, Preston High School  
Jenni Kuhn, Eagle High School  
Karina Reed, Centennial High School  
Megan Schwab, Timberline High School  
Amanda Smith, Filer High School

*The Commission on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and The Poetry Foundation all extend their heartfelt admiration and congratulations to each of the finalists.*



Left: Second place, Jenni Kuhn, Eagle High School.

Right: Third place, Ana Bencomo, Teton High School. Pete Grady, photos.

# DEADLINES

*Our greatest weariness comes from work not done.*

– Eric Hoffer

College of Northern Idaho, Coeur d'Alene.



## INDIVIDUALS, EDUCATORS, and ORGANIZATIONS

QuickFund\$ 1  
*June 15, 2009*

QuickFund\$ 2  
*September 14, 2009*

QuickFund\$ 3  
*December 14, 2009*

*(application postmark date)*

## ArtsPowered Schools Institute

August 9 - August 14, 2009  
North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene  
[www.artspoweredschools.idaho.gov](http://www.artspoweredschools.idaho.gov)

Each summer the ArtsPowered Schools Summer Institute offers a residential professional opportunity designed to immerse educators in strategies for teaching in and through the arts.

## Idaho Commission on the Arts Meeting

Thursday, May 7, 2009 - Boise

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*Artists are the antennae  
of the race.*

– Ezra Pound